252 they produce. The juice which is squeezed out is saved, and starch is extracted from it to be used in pressing clothes. The nonpoisonous variety of manioc (aipim) is used to a much smaller extent. Usually the tuber is boiled in water and then eaten as though it were a potato, for it does not need any processing to render it edible.

241 463 Ten of the twenty-four gardeners concentrate on manioc, while the others raise bananas. Most of them also grow their own household subsistence crops, scattered among the manioc and bananas, such as corn, beans, squash, and often a few shoots of excellent tobacco. Many of them also produce a quarter or half acre of a heavy type of sugar cane (cana de chupar) which is stripped of its bark, cut into short pieces, and masticated, the pulp being spit out after the person has [146] [825] [789] sucked out the juice. Almost everyone indulges in this, and the sugar which is absorbed is undoubtedly a great source of energy. The plots (roças) are fenced and protected by an ox skull stuck on one of the fence posts to keep out the evil eye.

241 463 554 [427] There are many gardeners to the west of the town who rent their small plots from either the Engenho da Vila or the federal school. This area has not produced sugar cane for many years, for it lacks the surface covering of massapê. These gardeners are often called matutos ("hicks"), real backwoodsmen who get along on subsistence agriculture and seldom leave their rural neighborhood. They are as far removed from contact with modern civilization as anyone could be while living in the Recôncavo. They live in well-hidden, small houses of mud and thatch, and one can ride through this section without seeing anyone.

443 463 [608] The peddlers (ambulantes) listed in Group 3 have their houses in Vila Recôncavo but go from town to town selling their wares. While they do some trading at the fairs they also cover a regular route independent of the fairs. Compadresco, the system of godparentship, is important to them, for the houses of such relations give them a base of operations in every town they visit. One of the three is a man who buys and sells jewelry, and the other two are women; one sells cloth for dresses and the other sweets (doces), peanuts, and dried shrimp. The latter is one of the famous street merchants (bahianas) of Salvador; she sits on a street corner before a portable table selling favorite Bahian snacks such as acarajé and abará. She goes to Salvador on the boat on Saturdays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, returning to Vila Recôncavo the